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12. The image processing method of claim 9,  
wherein the estimated contrast (Lv, Hv) is defined by a combination of  
luminance Lv corresponding to a color of lines and dots generated in the input image  
and luminance Hv corresponding to a color of a background of the input image, and  
wherein the contrast (Lv, Hv) of the input image is raised to a maximum of  
contrast (Vmin, Vmax) which is defined by a combination of lower limit of luminance  
Vmin and upper limit of luminance Vmax of possible luminances, so that a lower  
luminance and higher luminance of luminances Lv, Hv which define the contrast of  
the input image are converted to the lower limit of luminance Vmin and upper limit of  
luminance Vmax.

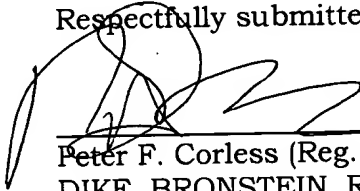
#### REMARKS

Claims 11-12 have been added. No new matter is presented by  
virtue of this Amendment.

Applicants respectfully request entry of this Amendment prior to examination.

Early consideration and allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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